

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 04436 01 OF 02 270808Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-07 IO-13 TRSE-00 /076 W
-----094609 270811Z /10

P 270705Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3279

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 4436

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, AF

SUBJECT: BHUTTO'S KABUL VISIT MARRED BY BURKI'S PROPAGANDA MISFIRE

REF: KABUL 4331

1. SUMMARY. PAKISTANI PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO DEPARTED FROM KABUL ON JUNE 23 AFTER BRIEFING PRESIDENT DAOUD ON HIS RECENT TALKS IN OTHER MUSLIM COUNTRIES, EXPLAINING THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN, AND THANKING THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT FOR ITS POLICY OF NON-INTERFERENCE AND RESTRAINT. THE PAKISTANI-AFGHAN DIALOGUE ON BILATERAL MATTERS WAS LEFT IN ABEYANCE UNTIL AFTER THE PAKISTANI ELECTIONS IN OCTOBER. BHUTTO'S KABUL VISIT WAS MARRED BY AN UNTIMELY ANTI-AFGHAN ARTICLE IN THE "PAKISTAN TIMES." END SUMMARY.

2. THE HIGH POINT OF THE JUNE 22-23 VISIT TO KABUL BY
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PAGE 02 KABUL 04436 01 OF 02 270808Z

PAKISTANI PRIME MINISTER ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO (REFTEL) WAS HIS TWO-HOUR TALK WITH PRESIDENT MOHAMMAD DAOUD ON THE AFTERNOON OF HIS ARRIVAL. ACCORDING TO PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR ALI ARSHAD, BHUTTO BRIEFED DAOUD ON HIS RECENT TALKS WITH ARAB AND IRANIAN LEADERS, EXPLAINED THE CURRENT DOMESTIC SITUATION IN PAKISTAN, AND EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE POLICY OF

NON-INTERFERENCE AND RESTRAINT PURSUED THUS FAR BY THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN (GOA). NO BILATERAL ISSUES WERE DISCUSSED; IT WAS AGREED BY BOTH SIDES THAT A RESUMPTION OF THE 1976 AFGHAN-PAKISTANI "DIALOGUE" SHOULD WAIT UNTIL AFTER PAKISTAN'S ELECTIONS.

3. BHUTTO'S VISIT WAS MARRED BY THE REMARKABLE DECISION OF THE "PAKISTAN TIMES" H. K. BURKI TO RE-HASH, ON THE VERY EVE OF HIS LEADER'S ARRIVAL IN KABUL, LAST MONTH'S FUROR OVER PRESIDENT MOHAMMAD DAOUD'S "BUSINESS WEEK" INTERVIEW ON AFGHAN-PAKISTANI RELATIONS (ISLAMABAD 5279 ET AL). BURKI'S ARTICLE WAS REPORTED TO HAVE ALSO INCLUDED A STATEMENT THAT BHUTTO INTENDED TO DISCUSS WITH DAOUD INCREASED AFGHAN TOOP CONCENTRATIONS NEAR THE PAKISTANI FRONTIER.

4. PAKISTANI DCM TANVIR AHMAD KHAN TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HE WAS INFORMED ABOUT THE BURKI ARTICLE THROUGH AN URGENT TELEPHONE CALL FROM A COLLEAGUE IN THE PAKISTANI FOREIGN OFFICE SHORTLY BEFORE BHUTTO'S ARRIVAL. HE RECEIVED THE BURKI TRANSCRIPT BY TELEX JUST BEFORE JOINING THE WELCOMING PARTY AT KABUL AIRPORT -- WHERE HE MET WAHEED ABDULLAH, AFGHANISTAN'S MINISTER-IN-CHARGE FOR FOREIGN
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PAGE 03 KABUL 04436 01 OF 02 270808Z

AFFAIRS, BEARING HIS OWN COPY OF THE ARTICLE. WAHEED OBSERVED ARCHLY TO TANVIR THAT BOTH APPEARED TO BE CARRYING THE SAME DOCUMENT.

5. ACCORDING TO TANVIR, THE BURKI ARTICLE CONSTITUTED THE FIRST ITEM OF BUSINESS BHUTTO HAD TO HANDLE AT KABUL. THE PAKISTANIS DISAVOWED THEIR "CONTROVERSIAL JOURNALIST" AND TOLD THE AFGHANS THEY WOULD BE ISSUING A CLARIFYING STATEMENT. THE AFGHANS SUBSEQUENTLY PUBLICIZED THEIR OWN TART RETORT (THE COMPLETE TEXT IS BEING SUBMITTED BY AIRGRAM), "STRONGLY CONDEMNING AND DENYING THE COMPLETELY BASELESS, SELF-SERVING, AND IRRESPONSIBLE PUBLICATIONS MADE BY THE OFFICIAL DAILY "PAKISTAN TIMES" ON THE EVE OF A VISIT THAT MR. BHUTTO HIMSELF HAS WISHED TO PAY TO AFGHANISTAN." (BOTH BEFORE AND DURING THE BHUTTO VISIT, THE AFGHAN PRESS HAD MADE A POINT OF REPEATEDLY STATING THAT THE BHUTTO VISIT WAS AT HIS OWN INITIATIVE.) THE AFGHANS ALSO EXPRESSED "SURPRISE" OVER THE ALLEGATION ABOUT AFGHAN TROOP MOVEMENTS, TERMING IT "UTTERLY BASELESS AND UNTRUE." THE

AFGHAN STATEMENT CONCLUDES BY SURMISING THAT
"THIS ALLEGATION IS THE PRODUCT OF THE IMAGINATION
OF THOSE CIRCLES WHO ARE OPPOSED TO THE IMPROVEMENT
OF RELATIONS BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND SUSPICION
THAT SUCH EVENTS ARE NEVER ACCIDENTAL, BUT
INSTEAD REFLECT CONSPIRACIES. IN HIS OWN
PERSONAL VIEW, ONLY THE AMBITION AND HUBRIS
OF BURKI ("WHO LIKES TO BE PROVOCATIVE") WERE
INVOLVED, BUT, OBSERVED TANVIR, HIS AMBASSADOR,
ALI ARSHAD, WAS INCLINED TO AGREE SOMEWHAT WITH
THE AFGHANS IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE.

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PAGE 01 KABUL 04436 02 OF 02 270805Z
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USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 /076 W
-----094649 270811Z /20

P 270705Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3280

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 4436

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

7. TANVIR SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT FORCED BURKI
TO RUN A FRONT-PAGE RETRACTION IN THE "PAKISTAN
TIMES" ON THE FOLLOWING DAY -- BUT THAT HAS NOT
YET BEEN REPORTED IN THE AFGHAN MEDIA. ACCORDING
TO TANVIR, BURKI INSISTED THAT HE HAD RELIABLE
INFORMATION ABOUT AFGHAN TROOP CONCENTRATIONS --
BUT THE PAKISTANI EMBASSY HAD REBUTTED HIM, SAYING
THAT IT HAD NO SUCH INFORMATION.

8. IN SPITE OF THE TESTY REACTION TO THE BURKI
STORY BEING PUBLICIZED BY THE AFGHAN MEDIA THROUGH-
OUT HIS STAY, BHUTTO'S VISIT OTHERWISE RECEIVED
NEUTRAL PRESS TREATMENT. THE AFGHAN WELCOMING
AND DEPARTURE PARTIES WERE BOTH HEADED BY

DR. ABDUL MAJID, MINISTER OF STATE (THE MOST
SENIOR MINISTER) AND WAHEED ABDULLAH, MINISTER-
IN-CHARGE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS. PRESIDENT DAOUD
GAVE BHUTTO AND HIS PARTY, WHICH INCLUDED AZIZ
AHMED, PAKISTANI MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
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PAGE 02 KABUL 04436 02 OF 02 270805Z

AND AGHA SHAHI, SECRETARY, PAKISTANI MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, A DINNER ON THE EVENING OF
JUNE 22.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROPAGANDA, PRESS COMMENTS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977KABUL04436
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770228-0698
Format: TEL
From: KABUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770615/aaaaamuy.tel
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Litigation History:
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 KABUL 4331
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2023603
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BHUTTO'S KABUL VISIT MARRED BY BURKII'S PROPA- GANDA MISFIRE
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, PK, AF, (BHUTTO, ALI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f159da75-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009